

REPORT

OF THE

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

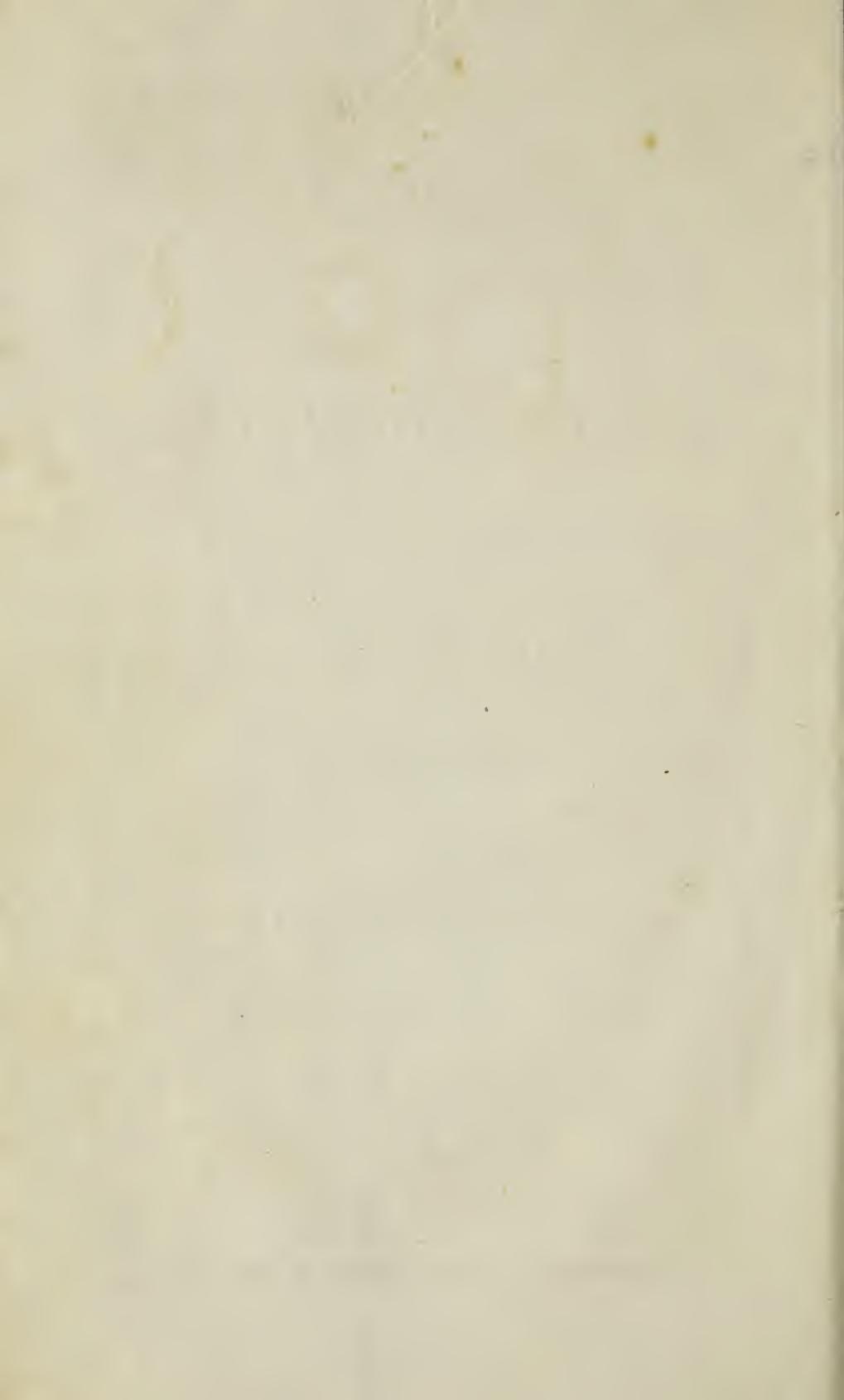
OF THE

Town of Canton,

APRIL 4th, A. D. 1853.

PRINTED AND DISTRIBUTED BY ORDER OF THE TOWN.

CANTON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM BENSE.
1853.



R E P O R T.

IN presenting our Annual Report of the state and condition of your Public Schools, we feel gratified at being able to say that throughout the entire year we have, in a remarkable degree, enjoyed the coöperation of our fellow citizens. We have seen evidences on every hand, of an increased and constantly increasing interest in the cause of public education and in the thorough training of our rising generation to habits of good order and good morals. This has been manifested by the pains which parents have taken to secure the punctual and constant attendance of their children at school ;—by their seconding the efforts of the teachers in discipline in every possible way. Sickness, death, and circumstances over which no control could possibly be had, have in some cases disturbed the prosperity of the schools for a time, but as a general thing, the average daily attendance and punctuality have far surpassed that of any previous year within our knowledge.

A new zeal, kindled, it may have been, in a favored section of the town, has—as who could not see that it would—spread into other sections, until all the Districts have felt its genial glow, and have become fired with laudable emulation to excel and to outstrip the others.

Hailing the auspicious omen with a cordial greeting, your Committee took the hint and raised higher the standard of requirements in the qualifications of teachers. Candidates, as they presented themselves for examination, were sternly tested by the standard thus adopted. No certificate, however well endorsed—no recommendations, however eloquently expressed, were deemed sufficient. The candidate was examined not only as to his general qualifications, but also with reference to his fitness to teach the particular school for which he applied. By adopting this course, although we were compelled to reject several candidates, we felt that we were true to the responsibility of our trust. Aided by judicious Committee men in the several Districts, justly deserving the title *Prudential*, we were thus enabled to secure the labors of teachers worthy of the name; instructors who understood the business of their vocation; workmen who needed not to be

ashamed ; and of whom, and of whose labors, we and you, to-day, may honestly feel proud.

But while we thus, as it were, fall into a strain somewhat self-laudatory, let us be allowed, for truth compels it, to say that we have had some difficulties to overcome. There have been instances of insubordination which could be dissipated and quelled only by prompt and efficient measures. And when we have found it necessary to interfere, we have found that there were some who doubted the expediency of our measures, and thought that there was no need of a School Committee. Yet these even, we think, came at last to approve of our policy. In one or more Districts, we have ascertained that quite a number of children were employed to labor in the mills, who ought to be in the schools. But we have "upon inquiry" found that all the cases were such as were provided for by the 4th Section of the Act of 1852, entitled, "An Act concerning the attendance of children at School," and therefore we do not report them. We consider the law on this subject as it now stands, of no force ; it being so modified and conditioned as to be as near no law at all as possible.

SEVEN SCHOOL DISTRICTS have been under our charge. Sixteen different teachers have been employed—six male and ten female. Three male teachers were employed during the Summer, and six female. During the Winter, there have been employed five male and six female teachers. In District No. 4, a change was made in the middle of the Winter term.

The amount of money raised by the Town for schools, was	\$2,000.00
The interest of Massachusetts School Fund,	121.26
Whole amount of money appropriated for schools, . .	\$2,121.26
Add amount raised by contribution in District 2, . . .	30.00
Amount,	\$2,151.26

Average wages paid to male teachers per month, including board, \$37.00. Average wages paid to female teachers per month, including board, \$15.22.

Whole number of scholars in all the schools in Summer, . .	548
Average attendance,	396
Whole number of scholars in all the schools in Winter, . .	548
Average attendance,	433

DISTRICT NO. 1.

Whole number of children between the ages of 5 and 15, . .	56
Amount of money appropriated to the District,	\$219.24

SUMMER TERM.

Prudential Committee, JAMES T. SUMNER. Teacher, Miss MARIA TUCKER. Length of school, $5\frac{1}{2}$ months ; wages of teacher per month, including board, \$18 ; whole number of scholars registered, 60 ; average attendance of scholars, $41\frac{3}{11}$; number under 5 years of age, 4 ; number over 15 years of age, 2.

WINTER TERM.

Teacher, Miss MARIA TUCKER. Length of school, 4 months ; wages of teacher per month, including board, \$20 ; whole number of scholars, 65 ; average attendance of scholars, $58\frac{1}{13}$; number under 5 years of age, 2 ; number over 15 years age, 6.

We have, in a former report, spoken of the peculiar aptness of Miss Tucker as a teacher. All that we expected of her at the commencement of her labors in May, has been fulfilled. Her register speaks for itself. We can only hope that this District may enjoy her labors so long as she shall make teaching her vocation.

DISTRICT NO. 2.

Whole number of children between the ages of 5 and 15, . . .	39
Amount of money appropriated to the District,	\$183.07
" " contributed by the District, :	30.00

SUMMER TERM.

Prudential Committee, GALEN SPARE. Teacher, Miss MARY ANN THAYER. Length of school, $2\frac{1}{2}$ months ; wages of teacher per month, including board, \$14 ; whole number of scholars, 32 ; average attendance of scholars, 27+ ; number of scholars under 5 years of age, 3 ; number of scholars over 15 years of age, 2.

This was a good school. The teacher was active, energetic and prompt.

WINTER TERM.

Teacher, Mr. WALDO DANIELS. Length of school, $4\frac{1}{2}$ months ; wages of teacher per month, including board, \$34.00 ; whole number of scholars, 42 ; average attendance of scholars, $38\frac{13}{15}$; number of scholars under 5 years of age, 0 ; number of scholars over 15 years of age, 10.

This was an excellent school in every respect. And how it could be otherwise, we cannot well see. With but 42 pupils, nearly one-fourth of whom were over 15 years of age, with a skilful and experienced teacher entirely devoted to his business, with the sympathies of all the parents enlisted on his behalf, how could

it fail to be an excellent school! We cannot too highly commend the scholars in this school for their punctuality and zeal. A remarkable feature in this school was the exhibition at the closing examination of "THE MONITOR," a printed paper, filled with essays and poetical compositions, the productions of the pupils in the school. This had been published semi-monthly, in manuscript, during the Winter, and at our visits we have been favored with the reading of its contents.

DISTRICT NO. 3.

Whole number of children between the ages of 5 and 15, . . .	209
Amount of money appropriated to the District,	\$745.05

PRIMARY DEPARTMENT. SUMMER TERM.

Prudential Committee, DAVID S. SHERMAN. Teacher, Miss SARAH C. MESSINGER. Length of school, $6\frac{1}{2}$ months; wages of teacher per month, including board, \$18; whole number of scholars, 129; average attendance of scholars, 101; number of scholars under 5 years of age, 16; none over 15 years of age. Miss L. Y. BOARDMAN was employed as assistant in this school. It was divided into two terms. Wages of assistant per month, including board, \$14.

GRAMMER DEPARTMENT. SUMMER TERM.

Teacher, Mr. W. L. P. BOARDMAN. Length of school, $6\frac{1}{2}$ months; wages of teacher per month, including board, \$44; whole number of scholars 90; average attendance of scholars, $69\frac{9}{10}$; number of scholars over 15 years of age, 4; none under 5 years of age. Miss L. Y. BOARDMAN was assistant also in this school. This school was divided into two terms, which, as in the case of the Primary Department, we call the Summer term.

PRIMARY DEPARTMENT. WINTER TERM.

Teacher, Miss SUSAN BOARDMAN. Length of school, 4 months; wages of teacher per month, including board, \$12; whole number of scholars, 79; average attendance of scholars, $56\frac{3}{10}$; number of scholars under 5 years of age, 6.

This school was taught in the Baptist vestry. The instruction was thorough, and the teacher acquitted herself of her difficult task, well. It requires no little skill and discretion to manage a school of 80 pupils of such tender age. And we are of opinion that Miss Boardman owed no small part of her success, which we think was remarkable, to the sympathizing visits of parents and friends, made during the term.

INTERMEDIATE DEPARTMENT.

Teacher, Miss SARAH C. MESSINGER. Length of school, 4 months ; wages of teacher per month, including board, \$18 ; whole number of scholars, 73 ; average attendance of scholars, 61 ; no scholars over 15 years of age ; none under 5 years of age.

Whatever we may say of the excellencies of this school will fall far short of its merits. It excels in all the qualities of a good school.

GRAMMAR DEPARTMENT.

Teacher, Mr. W. L. P. BOARDMAN. Length of school, 4 months ; wages of teacher per month, including board, \$44 ; whole number of scholars, 62 ; average attendance of scholars, $53\frac{7}{10}$; number of scholars over 15 years of age, 4.

The three schools in this District, have justified the expectations of your Committee. In the Grammar Department, the beneficial results of the change made by adopting the plan of having three schools, have been very apparent. Increased attention has been given to Arithmetic, and we have rarely heard so perfect recitations as were made by the pupils in this department at the various visits we have made, and at the closing examination. We like to see a pupil go to the black-board without his text-book, and there show by his ready performance of any example given him, that the rule and the principle are perfectly understood. And we saw it in this school. Spelling receives in this school careful attention, and the art of reading and writing the English language correctly, is well taught, as was testified to by the great number of excellent essays or "compositions" submitted to our examination. All that is now needed in this District, is, a school-house capable of accommodating the several schools, which should also be built with an eye to the present rapid increase of population.

DISTRICT NO. 4.

Whole number of children between the ages of 5 and 15, . . .	25
Whole amount of money appropriated to the District, . . .	\$153.25

SUMMER TERM.

Prudential Committee, JEDEDIAH TUCKER. Teacher, Miss ARDELIA A. MONK. Length of school $3\frac{1}{2}$ months ; wages of teacher per month, including board, \$18 ; whole number of scholars, 23 ; average attendance of scholars, 18 ; number of scholars under 5 years of age, 4 ; none over 15 years.

This was emphatically a good school, prosperous and increasing

in interest from the beginning to the closing examination, which was a day of uncommon interest to parents and Committee.

WINTER TERM.

Teacher, Miss ELLEN MCKENDRY. Length of school, $1\frac{3}{4}$ months; whole number of scholars, 20; average attendance of scholars, —; wages of teacher per month, including board, \$—; number of scholars under 5 years of age, —; number of scholars over 15 years of age, 0. (Register not filled out.)

We now come to the only unpleasant part of our Report. Miss McKendry was, in the opinion of the Committee, qualified by attainments and by experience to teach this or any school in town. At our first visit, we found 14 pupils present, and the school appeared to be doing well. But during the Winter, from some unexplained cause, the children did not attend school; and, becoming satisfied that her usefulness was at an end in this District, we advised that she had better resign her charge, which was done.

Miss MONK was again employed for the six remaining weeks, or $1\frac{1}{2}$ months. Wages per month, including board, \$20; whole number of scholars, 21; average attendance of scholars, $14\frac{1}{2}$; number of scholars under 5 years of age, 3.

Nothing occurred to interrupt the harmony of the school, and at the closing examination, evidence of thorough teaching was manifested.

It gives us pain to be compelled to record the facts concerning this school. But we should be unfaithful to our trust did we keep back anything. And here we wish also to say, that, in our opinion, there was no reason why the children should thus desert this school. Children should not be allowed to be the judges of the qualifications of their teachers. Their likes and dislikes should have little weight with parents in determining the usefulness of a teacher. And no representations of scholars to their parents should induce them to withdraw their children from the school.

DISTRICT NO. 5.

Whole number of children between the ages of 5 and 15,	63
Amount of money appropriated to the District,	\$234.15

SUMMER TERM.

Prudential Committee, CHARLES E. WATERS. Teacher, Mr. CHARLES WIGHT. Length of school, 4 months; wages of teacher per month, including board, \$35; whole number of scholars, 63; average attendance of scholars, $45\frac{7}{9}$; number under 5 years of age, 6; number over 15 years of age, 3.

Under the tuition of Mr. Wight, this school made good progress.

The practice of reading original written compositions was introduced by him, and cultivated with commendable zeal. The interest of the parents in the school continued unabated; and at the closing examination, your Committee were of opinion that the money had been judiciously expended.

WINTER TERM.

Teacher, Mr. WILLARD S. EVERETT. Length of school, 4 months; wages of teacher, including board, \$30; whole number of scholars, 60; average attendance of scholars, $39\frac{3}{16}$; number under 5 years of age, 5; none over fifteen years of age.

This school suffered from an epidemic, which greatly diminished the average attendance. At the closing examination, but 28 pupils were present. But the interest felt by the District in their school was manifested by the presence of 45 spectators. The teacher was punctual, diligent, enterprising and faithful. The reading of the scholars was much better than at the previous examination.

DISTRICT NO. 6.

Whole number of children between the ages of 5 and 15, . . .	80
Whole amount of money appropriated to the District, . . .	\$270.40

SUMMER TERM.

Prudential Committee, ABEL FARRINGTON. Teacher, Miss SARAH E. GAY. Length of school, 4 months; wages of teacher per month, including board, \$17; whole number of scholars, 67; average attendance of scholars, $35\frac{7}{8}$; number of scholars under 5 years of age, 4; number of scholars over 15 years of age, 0.

This school began well. Miss Gay was a thorough scholar, and desirous of doing her duty faithfully. Yet we found that she had not that degree of tact in governing, or had not the experience which the school required. The school needed the care of an energetic, experienced teacher, to enable it to make such progress as we desired. Certain symptoms of insubordination manifested themselves, which, at one time, threatened very seriously to injure and interrupt the school. But by judicious management on the part of the Prudential Committee and the parents, the school went on well to the end.

WINTER TERM.

Teacher, Mr. THOMAS B. BROWN. Length of school, $4\frac{1}{2}$ months; wages of teacher per month, including board, \$36; whole number of scholars, 67; average attendance of scholars, $50\frac{57}{100}$; number of scholars under 5 years of age, 0; number of scholars over 15 years of age, 6.

This school, under the tuition of Mr. Brown, has covered itself with glory. From the beginning to the end, the teacher has possessed the entire confidence and respect of pupils and parents, which is the surest presage of success. We say nothing of those pupils—young children—who were not able to attend school by reason of causes elsewhere alluded to, for of them we expected nothing. But of the others, the 65 who were present at the closing examination, *which was held in the Chapel*, we do say that they have made, comparatively speaking, more improvement than any other school in town. We shall not soon forget the excellent reading of several of the older pupils, nor their perfect recitations in arithmetic at the black-board. The character of the compositions read, considering the age of the pupils, was of the highest order. The chief characteristic of the teaching of Mr. Brown has been, not to hurry his pupils, but to make them understand thoroughly every thing they have studied. He is eminently qualified for the office of teacher by talents and attainments, and we hope the District will secure his services for the future.

DISTRICT NO. 7.

Whole number of children between the ages of 5 and 15,	78
Whole amount of money appropriated to the District,	\$316.10

SUMMER TERM.

Prudential Committee, TIMOTHY KALEY. Teacher, Mr. EDWARD M. LANCASTER. Length of school $4\frac{1}{2}$ months $2\frac{1}{2}$ days; wages of teacher per month, including board, \$36; whole number of scholars, 84; average attendance of scholars, 60; number of scholars under 5 years of age, 7; number of scholars over 15 years of age, 3.

At our first visit to this school in May last, we found 63 scholars present. And although there was considerable "noise and confusion," we saw that the teacher was a man of the right stamp, and would do as well as any man could be expected to do under the circumstances. It was evident that he would have a hard task. He was surrounded by scholars of all ages, sizes and degrees of attainment. He was in the predicament of the hospitable Hibernian, who had chairs enough but too much company. In a word, the school-room was like another distinguished foreigner's library, when the children all went in, it would not hold them; *it was too small*. We have heard that in every place there is always room for one more; but we must believe that this was an exception. And not only was the school too large for the school-room, but also it was too large for the teacher. What can one teacher do with a school of 84 different pupils, of all ages, from the *toddling* infant, whose principal business is to keep from falling from

its seat, to the young Master or Miss of seventeen? Yet Mr. Lancaster, rising superior to these difficulties, and cheered by the sympathizing Prudential Committee and parents, brought the school triumphantly through to the end.

PRIMARY DEPARTMENT. WINTER TERM.

Teacher, Miss MARTHA CLARK. Length of school, $3\frac{1}{2}$ months; whole number of scholars, 25; average attendance of scholars, 22; wages of teacher per month, including board and rent of school-room, \$12.

Your Committee made but one visit to this school, when we found that Miss Clark was well calculated for the duties of her position, and we have been satisfied that she retained the love of her pupils in an eminent degree.

GRAMMAR DEPARTMENT.

Teacher, Mr. EDWARD M. LANCASTER. Length of school, $3\frac{1}{2}$ months; wages of teacher per month, including board, \$36; whole number of scholars, 54; average attendance of scholars, $47\frac{1}{2}$; number of scholars over 15 years of age, 7.

The effect of the change made in this school at the commencement of this term, was immediate. Good order soon became a fixed habit. Increased attention to study followed as a matter of course. The teacher was enabled to devote his time to pupils better able to appreciate his talents. Penmanship began to flourish,—reading and spelling went up,—arithmeticians made a good figure,—and from the beginning to the closing examination, which was attended by a large number of the parents in the District, there was a steady, constant improvement in every branch of study taught and in the deportment of the pupils. And we may be permitted to add that we have rarely seen so good specimens of penmanship or of drawing anywhere, as were exhibited in this school.

May we be allowed to suggest to the people of this District, that the time has come when they should have a more commodious school-house.

It will have been seen that there are at present enrolled on our school registers the names of 548 children. One-fifth of our whole population are at school. Their characters are yet unformed. Shall they be well informed, intelligent, humane, well disposed towards the preservation of good order, good government, and civil and religious liberty, upright, moral and virtuous, or shall they be ignorant, stupid, barbarous, disobedient to the laws of God and man, licentious, profligate and vicious? These are questions which every citizen should solemnly consider. The future destiny of these children is in your hands. Their character will be the character of the next generation. The present active members of society bear the stamp and coloring of their school

instruction. The majority of the voters of to-day, fifteen years ago, were pupils in the schools.

Every page of the history of the world bears irresistible testimony to the fearful results of neglecting the instruction of the young, and to the benefits and blessing of faithful education. See to it that you are mindful of the teachings of history.

Occasionally there may be heard complaints of increased taxation. But these pass away in mere words which mean nothing. For you cannot but be convinced that, to use the language of an enlightened contemporary, "in promoting good scholarship and good habits, we create a more active industry, make more energetic men, enlarge our commercial enterprises, and thus increase the capital of the town and diminish taxation ; that thus we shall draw to ourselves new citizens, who shall cast their lot among us, and give us greater financial strength than we have ever yet enjoyed. For nothing more commends a place of residence than the good character of its schools."

SAMUEL B. NOYES,
EZEKIEL CAPEN,
CHARLES ENDICOTT, } School Committee
of Canton.

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Read, accepted and voted to be printed.

Attest, ANDREW LOPEZ, Town Clerk.